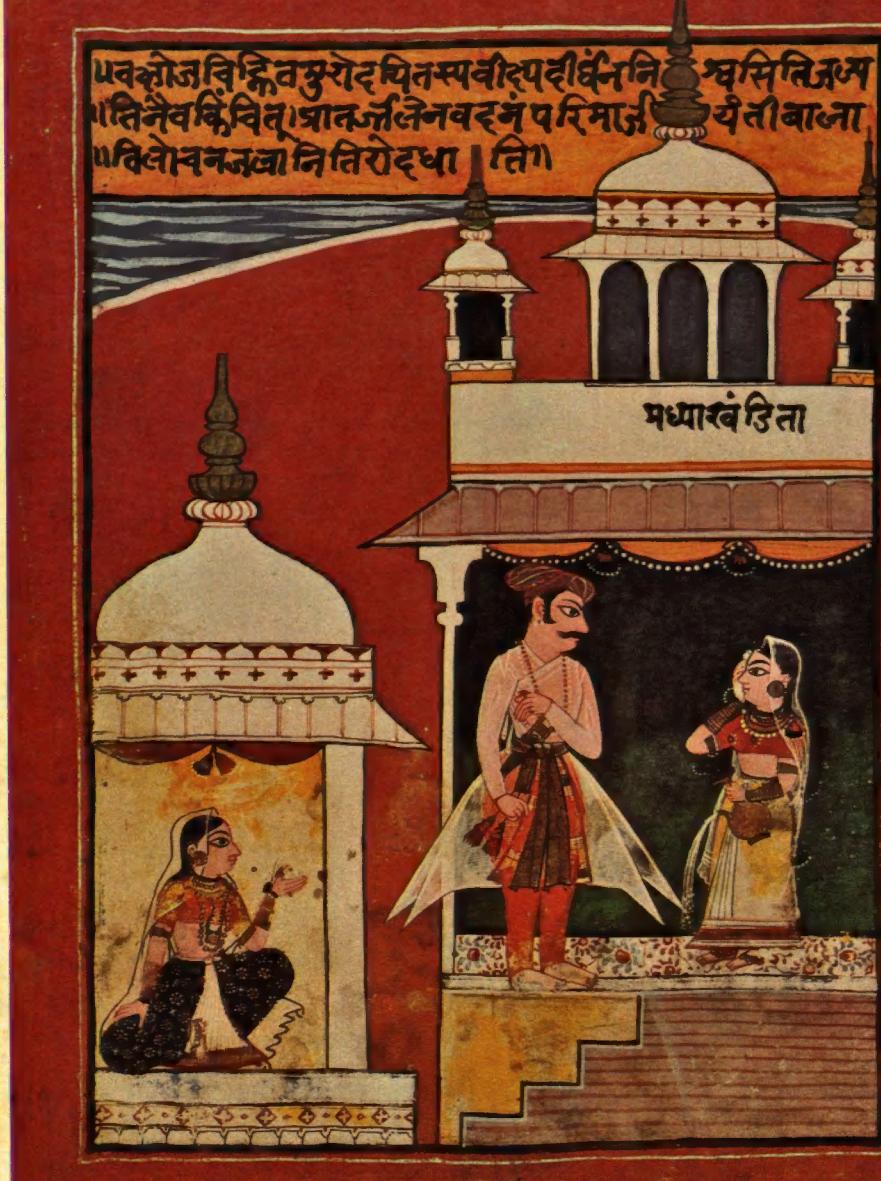


अत्र या पनाग वाङ्कृतः प्रातराग छनि पातय स्याः पातव दुता॥

पवकोजविक्षितमुरोदयितस्यवीह्यदीर्घनित्यं शस्त्रित्यजम
प्रतिनैव किंवित्। प्रातर्जलेनवहनं परिमार्जी यैतीवाला
पविलोवनजबानितिरोहधा। त्तिः॥

पधारवंडिता

खीणा



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THE FLUTE AND THE BRUSH

THE FLUTE AND THE BRUSH

Indian Paintings from the William Theo Brown and
Paul Wonner Collection

An Exhibition Organized by the Newport Harbor Art Museum
Text by Pratapaditya Pal

Newport Harbor Art Museum
Newport Beach, California
January 20-February 20, 1976

Arizona State University
Tempe, Arizona
March 14-April 18, 1976

Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center
Colorado Springs, Colorado
June 20-July 25, 1976

Los Angeles County Museum of Art
Los Angeles, California
October 3-November 7, 1976

The Art Galleries
University of California
Santa Barbara, California
November 16-December 19, 1976

de Saisset Art Gallery & Museum
The University of Santa Clara
Santa Clara, California
January 7-February 13, 1977



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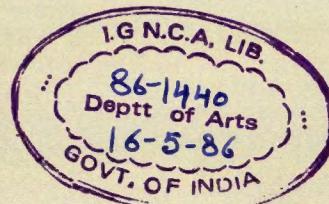
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**This catalogue is dedicated to
the memory of**

WALTER D. K. GIBSON, JR. (1903-1975)

**who played a special role in the development
of the Newport Harbor Art Museum**



FOREWORD Over the past eight years I have enjoyed the privilege of watching the gradual, meticulous culling of this superb collection of Indian miniatures. It is a very personal collection which seems to stem from both Bill Brown's and Paul Wonner's longtime interest in the utilization of the myth in art (earlier collecting produced works by such artists as Blake, Redon and Picasso, along with a superlative array of Southwest Indian Kachina dolls) and, of course, a keen eye for the esthetics.

True collecting is done with a passion and a desire to have those objects nearby to enjoy. It is no small sacrifice to let them go for a year. Therefore, on behalf of the Newport Harbor Art Museum and participating institutions, I wish to extend to these generous gentlemen our profound gratitude for permitting us this exhibition. It is also our good fortune to have the expertise of Dr. Pratapaditya Pal, Senior Curator of Indian and Islamic Art at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, who has provided a most enlightening catalogue introduction and comprehensive documentation of the paintings. Sincerest thanks to Dr. Pal and his staff.

Last but not least, to my own staff, particularly Phyllis Lutjeans, Curatorial Associate, and Sue Henger, Registrar, who always work far beyond the call of duty, my deepest appreciation.

Betty Turnbull
Curator



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS In few other countries is a curator expected to work as closely with collectors as he is in an American museum. The experience may at times prove to be traumatic, but mostly it is richly rewarding both for the museum and the curator. Although I have known Bill Brown and Paul Wonner for only a brief period of time, the relationship has been especially enjoyable, for it is always a pleasure to exchange ideas with sensitive and discriminating collectors. Equally gratifying is the fact that I have been given this opportunity to introduce this exquisite group of paintings to a wider public. I can only hope that the viewer will be able to derive as much pleasure from them as I have been able to experience on many an occasion while listening to Bill's virtuoso performance on the piano or savoring the delectable culinary efforts of Paul.

To my colleagues at the Museum, especially in our department, I remain grateful as usual for their cheerful cooperation in the preparation of this catalogue. In particular, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Mr. Edward Cornachio for his excellent photography which considerably enhances the quality of this catalogue. It is also a pleasure to acknowledge my indebtedness to Dr. W. G. Archer who kindly read the introduction and made a number of improvements.

Pratapaditya Pal
Curator of Indian and Islamic Art
Los Angeles County Museum of Art



INTRODUCTION

Although Indian paintings have been known in the West, particularly in Europe, since the seventeenth century, only in recent decades have they attracted the attention that they richly deserve. By and large, collecting Indian paintings, or "miniatures" as they are still referred to rather misleadingly, was fashionable among persons or families who had associations with colonial India. Notable among British collectors of sorts were Lord Clive, the founder of the Empire in India, and Warren Hastings, one of its early architects. Well known, also, is the fact that the Empress Maria-Theresa of Austria had one of her salons in the Schönbrunn palace decorated with Indian pictures. In the world of European aesthetes or intellectuals, however, Indian painting was hardly noticed until the present century.

As early as 1626, Pelsaert, the Dutch Agent at Agra, wrote home to his superiors: "Send us two or three good battle pictures, painted by an artist with a pleasing style, for the Moslems want to see everything from close by — also some decorative pictures showing comic incidents or nude figures."¹ Although Pelsaert's instructions do not reflect the prevailing attitude of contemporary European connoisseurs toward Indian painting, they are certainly not flattering, and one senses just a touch of disdain. Much more perceptive and appreciative are such recent comments as the following: "Delicacy we can find in other cultures; it is in the end the combination of daintiness with gusto that is unique to Indian painting. As the better forms of modern art detach us from Western traditions, or at least teach us the value of alternative methods, we can respond more fully to the strengths and exuberance of these masterly works."²

Curiously, the two collectors whose paintings are being exhibited here are themselves artists. And, refreshingly, they both collect Rajput rather than Mughal paintings.

"The Moslems" that Pelsaert mentions in his

communication quoted above are the Mughals who were responsible for inspiring and cultivating a style of painting that bears their dynastic name. It was the Mughal style with its distinctive brand of naturalism that appealed to seventeenth century European taste and continues to do so today. For instance, we know that Rembrandt's portfolio of drawings included several examples of Mughal portraits, and the Empress Maria-Theresa's salon is decorated in a style very similar to that seen in a painting in the present collection (no. 47).

As a distinct tradition, Rajput paintings were virtually unknown in Europe until they were "discovered" by Ananda Coomaraswamy around the turn of this century. Since then they have been admired and discussed by a great many European critics and aesthetes but none has done so with greater ardor than W. G. Archer. An emeritus keeper of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Archer is both a distinguished collector and one of the most prodigious writers on Rajput painting. It may also be noted that he, too, developed his passion for Indian paintings while serving in India.

Despite Coomaraswamy's long association with the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, appreciation of Indian painting in America remained confined to a relatively small group of oriental scholars and connoisseurs. The enterprising young dealer Nasli Heeramanec arrived in New York in the early thirties and continued to sell Rajput paintings well into the fifties for prices which would not buy a decent book on the subject today. It was in the late fifties that Indian paintings found serious collectors in America who began collecting with the enthusiasm and aggressiveness that are so characteristic of this nation's art collectors. Since then, a number of important private collections have been formed, and in less than a decade just a few Americans have succeeded in acquiring more Indian paintings than Europeans had done in centuries. Significantly, the majority of these American collectors have displayed a distinct penchant for Rajput, rather

than Mughal paintings.

Bill Brown and Paul Wonner met at Berkeley when they went back to school after World War II. Their first encounter with Indian painting took place in the gallery of R. E. Lewis, that mecca of Indian painting collectors on the West Coast. Being students, they were not exactly rich and visited the Lewis gallery to look at European prints. Accidentally, they saw a few Jain manuscript illuminations and Rajput drawings and their involvement was immediate. The curious extended eyes of the figures and the use of multiple perspective in Jain manuscript illuminations, rendered some four centuries ago, were so easy to appreciate in the post-Picasso era.

Although one of the first paintings they purchased was a Mughal portrait of an old ascetic (no. 42), both have remained essentially collectors of Rajput painting. And, here too they have acquired only what they have liked, irrespective of schools or styles or whether a subschool is fashionable or not. In speaking of their avocation they were quick to emphasize how personal the collection is and how they have no intention of making it comprehensive or historically complete.

Rajput paintings were done primarily for the rulers and nobility of the feudal kingdoms that flourished in Rajasthan, parts of Central India and the Northwestern Himalayas (Pahari). The rulers of these kingdoms belonged mostly to the kshatriya or the warrior caste, and came to be known as Rajputs or sons of Kings. Most Rajput rulers were politically allied to the imperial Mughal court at Agra or Delhi, and many in fact either attended the court as grandees or served in the Mughal army and administration. The courtly life of the Rajputs, therefore, became strongly influenced by cultural modes and tastes developed by the Mughal dynasty, which was Muslim and originally Turco-Mongol. Certainly, in their patronage of the fine arts the Rajput princes often emulated their imperial overlords.

Despite significant artistic influences of the Mughal style and the fact that often Muslim artists worked for Rajput patrons, the Rajput style is recognizably different. Following the more ancient indigenous tradition the Rajputs preferred subject matter that is essentially religious. Thus, themes concerning myths and legends of the gods Krishna-Vishnu and of Siva abound in Rajput paintings. Krishna, in particular, plays a pervasive role in the iconography for not only do most Rajputs adore Krishna, but almost every form of medieval poetry and rhetorical literature came to be dominated by the personality of this romantic god. Even where the paintings portray secular themes of love or of musical modes the central character is frequently represented as the blue-black god who charmed the cowherdesses of Vrindavan with his enchanting flute.

The Mughals, on the other hand, preferred to commission books of Persian epics and of dynastic histories, as well as portraits. Consequently the Mughal style is more naturalistic and painterly than the Rajput style, which is more symbolic and linear. Even though the Mughal style came strongly to influence some of the Rajput schools, such as those of Bundi/Kotah, Bikaner or Pahari schools after 1750, Rajput painters in general preferred unbroken areas of colors creating strong visual contrasts combined with austere compositions where delicately graceful figures have an enchanted existence. The Mughal style is more courtly and earthbound; the Rajput style lyrical and idyllic.

For Brown and Wonner the themes of Rajput paintings have a special meaning. Both admit that their early experience with the paintings was fragmentary as they knew little or nothing of the themes represented. But now that they are more familiar with the rich world of stories and legends that the unknown Indian artists portrayed so lovingly and romantically, their response to the paintings is a more rewarding, exhilarating experience. For Brown the wondrous and playful demons and

monsters of Rajput paintings sometimes conjure up images of childhood fantasy. Whether he knows the stories or not, he can relate instantly to the visual metaphors of a Rajput artist with telling immediacy. The fact that the stories and images belong to an altogether different culture is hardly an obstacle; obviously their underlying message is universal.

Wonner has been drawn to these paintings primarily for their lyrical delicacy of expression and attention to details, qualities not often found in contemporary art. His initial response developed slowly. As it is with Indian music the mind has to be simultaneously involved and relaxed in order to savor the voluptuous taste of Rajput painting as well. Even when the composition is as busy as in the Devgarh painting of a fainting musician (no. 30), a favorite of Wonner, Rajput painting is characterized by a simple and ponderous elegance that is restrained and yet inviting. The overall impression is of a gentle and serene world where time is of little consequence and love is a bottomless ocean. And those themes which relate to violence (nos. 10, 13) are delineated almost as amusing and festive occasions.

Although, like the medieval European artists, the Rajput painters often had to repeat their subjects, a thematic organization of the material (as it is done in this catalogue) reveals their astonishing power of inventiveness, for the styles differ recognizably from one school to another. Not only does one sense the artist's delight in his works, but, drenched in pure and sumptuous colors as these paintings are, they are suffused with a feeling of unmitigated joy. Details are rendered with tenderness and solicitude, while the rich and assertive areas of primary colors, as in the Mewar or the Bilaspur paintings (nos. 29, 31), have strong emotional values for the beholder in much the same way as a work by Matisse or Gauguin does. As one looks at these delightfully decorative paintings one is constantly made aware that art once was a

two-way street and the artist dared not become an obscurantist in order simply to display his virtuosity, or at times, the lack of it.

Notwithstanding the fact that a great quantity of Rajput paintings has survived, few artists' names are known. The situation is therefore analogous once again to that prevailing in medieval European art. In a sense this is a blessing, for we can appreciate the paintings for what they are rather than be distracted by the personalities and idiosyncrasies of the artists. Perhaps, at no other period of human history has art been so overwhelmed by personality cults as in the present age. It is refreshing, therefore, to see Brown and Wonner admiring works of art created centuries ago by unknown fellow artists and in a culture far removed from their own.

NOTES

¹As quoted by M. C. Beach, "The Gulshan Album and Its European Sources," *Boston Museum Bulletin* (LXIII, 332, 1965), p. 67.

²*Indian Paintings from the 17th to 19th Centuries* (Arthur Tooth and Sons, Ltd., London, 1974), p. 6.

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VAISHNAVA MYTHS

1

Fish Incarnation of Vishnu (Matsyāvataṛa)

Rajput style, Kangra school, ca. 1800

4 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches

An *asura* (demon) had once stolen the Vedas, the sacred texts of the Aryans, and fled into the ocean. In order to recover the texts, the god Vishnu assumed the form of a fish and followed the *asura* into the waters. In this painting the artist has delineated Vishnu as emerging from the mouth of a giant fish and attacking the *asura* who obviously is no match for the god. This is the first incarnation of Vishnu in a list of ten *avatāras*.





2

Vishnu Slaying an Aquatic Demon
Rajput style, Bundi/Kota school, 1750-1775
9x5 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches
Although Vishnu here is not emerging from a fish, this too possibly depicts the Matsyavatara theme.



The Churning of the Ocean
Rajput style, Basholi school, ca. 1700
8x10½ inches

In order to test who is superior, once the gods and the *asuras* decided to churn the ocean as a sort of tug-of-war contest. A mountain was employed as the churning stick which was supported by Vishnu in his incarnation as a tortoise. The churning produced among others a seven-headed horse, a celestial cow, an elephant, a pot

of nectar and the Goddess Lakshmi. Needless to say these were all taken by the gods as victory trophies. To further emphasize the supremacy of Vishnu, the artist here has placed him, in the guise of the flute-playing Krishna, at the summit of the mountain.



4

A Conference Between the Monkeys and the Bear King: From a *Rāmāyaṇa*

King: From a *Rāmāyaṇa*

Rajput style, Mankot school, 1700-1725

6½ x 11 inches

The *Rāmāyaṇa* is the story of an Aryan prince Rāma who was banished from the kingdom through the machinations of his stepmother. While in the forest, Rāvaṇa, the king of Laṅkā, abducted Rāma's wife, Sītā. Subsequently with the help of the monkeys and the bears Rāma recovered his wife. Although originally a mortal hero, Rāma came to be regarded as an incarnation of Vishnu. In this painting the bears and

the monkeys hold a conference to devise a method whereby Rāma's army can cross the seas which separate the island kingdom of Rāvaṇa from the mainland.

Other folios from this important set are in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Binney and the Walter collections.



Hanumān's Audience with Rāma: From a *Rāmāyaṇa*
Rajput style, Mandi school, ca. 1725
 $7\frac{1}{2}$ x 12 inches

One of the two great epics of India, the *Rāmāyaṇa*, was once avidly read by educated Hindus. Affluent patrons would often also have their manuscripts lavishly illustrated. In this composition the devout monkey,

Hanumān, stands reverently before Rāma, the hero of the *Rāmāyaṇa*. Behind him is his wife, Sītā, while his younger brother Lakshmaṇa is fanning Rāma with peacock's feathers.



6

A Hermitage Scene: From a *Rāmāyaṇa*
Rajput style, Guler school, 1750-1775
12 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 8 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches

Rāma, Lakshmana and Sītā prostrate themselves before a sage and his wives in a forest hermitage beside a stream.

Such idyllic landscapes are a distinguishing feature of eighteenth century paintings both of Guler and Kangra schools. Other folios from the same set are in the collections of W. G. Archer and Paul Walter.

॥ श्रीकृष्ण है सिना पुर आश्रामा जुधिस्तर को समाधान जु करन आये ॥ ७८



7 Krishna Visiting King Yudhishtīra:
From a *Bhāgavata Purāna*
Rajput style, Malwa school, ca. 1650
 $6\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ inches

The *Bhāgavata Purāna* is one of the most popular Vaishnava texts and was copiously copied and illustrated in the Rajput world. It recounts in great detail the life of

Krishna who is the supreme deity of the Vaishnavas. In this folio Krishna of a blue complexion and his cap adorned with peacock's feathers is visiting King Yudhishtīra in the latter's capital, Hāstinapura. Krishna, who was of dark complexion, is painted blue in Indian paintings.

For two other folios see Binney, *Rajput Miniatures*, p. 57.



Vāsudeva Rescues the Baby Krishṇa:

From a *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*

Rajput style, Garhwal school, 1775-1800

8¾ x 12½ inches

It was preordained that Krishṇa would be born in the womb of Devakī and would destroy her brother, Kāṁsa, the tyrant who ruled Mathura. Kāṁsa therefore imprisoned Devakī and began killing all her children. The eighth child was Krishṇa and in order

to save him from Kāṁsa his father Vāsudeva carried him to Vrindavan and exchanged him for the daughter born to the cowherd Nanda and his wife Yaśodā. In the painting while Devakī and the prison guards sleep in the palace, Vāsudeva is seen crossing the river with the baby in his arms. As it was a stormy night, the serpent Vāsuki provided shelter for the divine child.



Krishna Sleeping with Balarama
Rajput style, Kangra school (?), 1850-1900
 $6\frac{7}{8} \times 8\frac{3}{8}$ inches

In this charming painting, strongly influenced by

European art, the baby Krishna is asleep with his foster brother Balarama in Nanda's house in Vrindavana. Yasoda is about to cover them with a coverlet.



10

Krishna Quells Kaliya: From a *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*
Rajput style, Malwa (Narsinghgarh) school, ca. 1725
 $7\frac{1}{2} \times 13\frac{1}{2}$ inches

Among the many heroic feats Krishna performed as a child, the incident when he subdued the poisonous serpent Kaliya in the river Yamuna has remained very popular with Rajput artists. Watched by his foster parents and the cowherd community of Vrindavan, Krishna is seen dancing on the polycephalous hood of the evil serpent.

For other folios see Binney, *Rajput Miniatures*, pp. 62, 63

*Krishna Destroys Bakasura:*From a *Bhagavata Purana*

Rajput style, Kangra school, ca. 1775

8½ x 5¾ inches

An asura assuming the form of a giant crane (*baka*) one day swallowed the child Krishna. Unable, however, to withstand the heat generated in his throat by Krishna, Bakasura brought him out. Krishna then tore apart the bird's beak to the great relief and jubilation of his companions.





12

Two Folios from a *Rukmini-harana*

Rajput style, Garhwal school, ca. 1775

8 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 12 $\frac{1}{8}$ inches

Rukmini-harana is a romance written about

Krishna's abduction of Rukmini and their ultimate marriage. In one of the folios here we see Rukmini, accompanied by her maids and guards, leaving the

palace for a temple where Krishna will abduct her. In the other folio the selected groom, Sisupala, is escorted by Rukmini's brother, Rukma, as the former arrives for a wedding that will not take place. For other paintings, probably by the same artist, see Mukandi Lal, *Garhwal Painting* (New Delhi, 1968), pls. XXIV, XXVI.



५



A Battle Scene from the Ushā-Aniruddha Myth
Rajput style, Guler school, 1775-1800
 $5\frac{1}{16} \times 9$ inches

In this battle scene, we see Śiva riding a chariot drawn by two bulls leading the army of Bānāsura. Krishṇa's grandson, Aniruddha, had clandestinely married Ushā, the daughter of Bānāsura, which led to the battle. Śiva came to help Bānāsura who was a great devotee of the god.

For a color reproduction see J. Soustiel, *Miniatures Orientales de l'Inde* (Paris, 1973), p. 105.

SAIVA MYTHS

14

The Descent of the Gaṅgā
Rajput style, Bilaspur school, 1700-1725

9¾ x 6¼ inches

According to legend the pious King Bhagīratha brought down the river Gaṅgā or Ganges from the mountains. In order to break the fall of

the mighty river, however, the waters had first to descend into the matted hair of Śiva. In this painting Śiva and Pārvatī, along with the bull

Nandi, rest on top of a mountain.

The river is seen to descend from Śiva's matted hair in a thin stream down to where Bhagīratha stands reverentially.

For another version of the same subject see Binney, *Rajput Miniatures*, p. 95,





15

Śiva and Pārvatī Straining Bhang
Rajput style, Basholi school,
ca. 1725

9x6 $\frac{3}{8}$ inches

In later mythology Śiva is portrayed as a man addicted to both hashish and *bhāng*. *Bhāng* is an opium extract which is mixed with milk, sugar and nuts to produce an intoxicating beverage. In this picture Pārvatī helps Śiva prepare the bhang which is a must for him every evening. For a color reproduction see J. Soustiel et M. C. David, *Miniatures de l'Inde*, 2, [Paris, 1974], p. 58.

The Holy Family
Rajput style, Bilaspur school (?),
1775-1800

7 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 5 inches

Śiva, Pārvatī and their sons, Gaṇeśa and Kārttikeya, are huddled together intimately below a tree at the summit of Mount Kailāsa, the legendary habitat of the god. They are protected from the cold of the snowy peaks by a leopardskin which is wrapped around the group like a cocoon. Śiva and Pārvatī also wear caps made of the same animal's skin, while the devout bull sits quietly in the foreground.





17

*A Female Devotee Approaches
a Shrine of Śiva*

Rajput style, Devgarh school,
ca. 1800

7 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 5 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches

A female devotee, wearing a see-through garment, approaches a forest shrine of Śiva. The image of Śiva is in the form of an abstract white phallus or *linga*, which is being bathed constantly with water dripping from a pot. The lady carries an ewer and a plate with flowers, garlands and a lamp.

18

*Śiva and Pārvatī
Enthroned*Rajput style, Chamba
school [?], ca. 1850
5x4 inches

In this hieratic representation, Śiva, with five heads and four arms, is enthroned with his wife, Pārvatī. His five heads symbolize the five elements and among his attributes are an antelope and a battle-axe. Such a painting may have been used as an icon in a domestic shrine.





19

The Adoration of Śiva
Rajput style, Jodphur
school, ca. 1850
 $17\frac{1}{2} \times 15\frac{5}{8}$ inches

The supremacy of Śiva is expressed in this painting by showing Brahmā, Vishṇu and Durgā worshipping Śiva. The multi-headed and multi-armed god is represented again on a flaming pillar.

Durgā Killing the Buffalo Demon
 Rajput style, Mandi school, 1750-1775
 $10\frac{1}{2} \times 6\frac{3}{4}$ inches

The Goddess Durgā astride her tiger is about to destroy a demon who has assumed the form of a buffalo.

Normally the lion is the goddess' mount, but in the art of this period she often rides a tiger. The monkey-god Hanumān holds a parasol behind the goddess.





A Goddess in Landscape
Rajput style, Guler school, ca. 1800
 $5\frac{3}{8} \times 8\frac{7}{8}$ inches

A four-armed goddess, who is an emanation of Durgā, is seated hieratically on a lotus at the summit of a grassy knoll against a flaming orange background. The mountain is the favorite habitat of the goddess.

MUSIC

22

Kāmod Rāginī: From a
Rāgamālā Series

Rajput style, Malwa school, ca. 1650
 $7\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{3}{8}$ inches

This painting illustrates the
personification of the musical mode

Kāmod. The rāginī is shown as a
lovesick female preparing garlands
as she awaits the arrival of her lover.

For other folios from this set see
Binney, *Rajput Miniatures*, pp. 60-61
and Czuma, *Bickford Catalogue*, no.

69. Also in the Los Angeles County
Museum of Art Collection.



वातंनिनोलवपुषाद्यानाष्टैष्वालंवित्प्राज्ञाहा अते
तमलेति तिनेचरंतीष्टु नुगादिप्रसाधिक्षयं ॥१८॥ दिप
साधिकरणी



23

Dipasādhikā Rāginī: From a
Rāgamālā Series

Rajput style, Malwa school,
1650-1675

8x5¾ inches

A frightened lady runs from a storm at night into a pavilion where a man is resting on a bed. Examples of this well-known set are dispersed in several private and public collections. For references see Binney, *Rajput Miniatures*, p. 62.

मालकौशिकरागः



24

Mālakauśika Rāga:

From a *Ragamala Series*
Rajput style, Sirohi school, ca. 1675

8½ x 6¼ inches

A regally attired man plays a *vīṇā*
within a pavilion while a woman
offers him betel leaves. Outside
another woman is feeding a peacock.

For other folios from this set see
Heeramaneeck Catalogue, p. 128, no.
163; Czuma, *Bickford Catalogue*,
nos. 78-79; Pal, *Walter Catalogue*,
p. 74.



25

Vilāval Rāginī: From a Rāgamālā Series

Rajput style, Mewar or Sirohi school, 1675-1700

15x10 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches

The scene depicts the dressing room of a lady who is surrounded by attendants. Musicians perform in the foreground as the lady looks into a mirror while trying on an earring. Although the iconography is commonly given to the rāginī Vilāval, the inscription at the top identifies the subject as Guṇakali rāginī.

Both in terms of size and style, this painting is strikingly similar to a Mewar Rāgamālā set, several leaves of which are in Boston.

See Pal, *Rāgamālā Catalogue*,

p. 32.

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जन्मभौतिकागस्य सिंधुरात्मारु नेहश्चमरु ॥१॥ ॥ अंजनयदु रमाण विभिन्नां ॥
 रीमिता ॥ नानाद्यकुद्धलाः ॥ न ॥ रसारु कानने ॥ जासारु व नसुल्लिंहुत्तलेतंगा
 रीविमारु विद्वा ॥ एकाव्यक्तधर्मदर्शी ॥ न वि ॥ गानेहदानेन रः ॥ १॥ रतिष्ठुरामा



26

Sindhu or Māru Rāga:

From a Rāgamālā Series

Rajput style, school unknown,

1725-1750

9 1/8 x 7 1/4 inches

A princely figure, accompanied by other musicians, plays upon

a vīṇā beside a stream in a

rocky landscape. The iconography does not agree in all essentials with the known representations of either the

Sindhu or Māru.



27

Varāṭī Rāgiṇī: From a *Rāgamālā* Series

Rajput style, Bundi/Kota school, ca. 1750

7 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ inches

The painting shows a lady and her maid watching the birds return to their nests as the sun paints a colorful sky. A third woman walks toward the pavilion. The inscription reads: Varāṭī, a rāgiṇī of Śrī, to be sung at dusk.

Other folios from the same series are in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, Paul Walter Collection, and John Ford Collection. See Pal, *Rāgamālā Catalogue*, p. 23 and *passim*.

Todi Rāginī: From a *Rāgamālā*
Series

Rajput style, Raghogarh school, ca. 1775

10 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ inches

Todi is visualized as a forlorn lady who goes into a forest and sings before an audience of animals and birds beside a stream. Although Raghogarh is situated within the Malwa region of Central India, its paintings are related stylistically to those from Kota in Rajasthan.





29

Vanvicha Rāgaputra: From a
Rāgamālā Series

Rajput style, Bilaspur school,
1675-1700

8x6½ inches

Vanvicha is a son of the Hindola rāga according to the *Rāgamālā* tradition in the hills. The iconography consists of a prince listening to a man playing upon a pair of drums accompanied by another musician playing a wind instrument, perhaps the *sahnai*. Other folios from the same series are in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the Binney Collection. See Binney, *Rajput Miniatures*, pp. 92-93.

The Swooning Singer
Rajput style, Devgarh school, 1775-1800
 $7\frac{3}{8} \times 4\frac{1}{2}$ inches

A street singer has passed out while performing before a beautiful lady and is being revived by her maids. The lady looks down demurely from her chair. The painting may depict an isolated genre or illustrate a scene from a romance. A similar painting from Kota has been identified as a scene from *Mādhavānala*, a story about the tragic love of Mādhava for a courtesan. (See Welch, *A Flower from Every Meadow*, pp. 50-51). In attributing that painting to Kota, Welch writes that it is derived "from the work of Chokha, the Devgarh artist." Indeed this very painting, or one like it, may have been the very original referred to by Welch.



त्रन्यापनागचाक्तप्रातरागद्वानप्रातयस्यासारवाऽन्ता॥

पवक्षोजतिक्षिवमुरोदयितस्यवीद्यपदीवंनिश्चसितिज्ञय
गतिनैवकिंवित् आकर्त्तलेनवहमं परिमार्जयेतीबाला
॥विलोचनजखानितिरोदधा ति॥



LOVE

31

Offended Heroine: From a
Rasikapriyā Series

Rajput style, Mewar school, ca. 1625
8½ x 6 inches

Like the *Rasamañjari*, the *Rasikapriyā* of Keśavadāsa is also a rhetorical work concerned with love and lovers. Here in the larger pavilion an offended heroine (*madhyākhanditā*) stands with a waterpot in front of her husband. A second woman, probably a confidante, is seated in a smaller pavilion.

Other leaves from this series are in several public and private collections. See Binney, *Rajput Miniatures*, p. 19.

A Prince Caressing a Princess
Rajput style, Bikaner school, ca. 1650
 $7\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{3}{4}$ inches (including borders)

Such genre scenes became particularly popular during the reign of the emperor Shah Jahan (1628-58) whose love for his wife Mumtaj is immortalized in the Taj Mahal at Agra.

The seventeenth century Bikaner school shows strong influences of the Mughal style, for the Bikaner princes maintained close political and cultural ties with the imperial Mughal court.





33

A Forlorn Lady

Rajput style, Bikaner school, ca. 1675
8¾ x 5¼ inches

This painting illustrates love-in-separation by showing a young woman resting against a solitary willow tree and holding what looks like a book in her left hand. Such genre scenes with a single woman were particularly popular with Bikaner artists in this period.

Published: E. Blochet, *Les Miniatures Persane et Indo-Persanes de la Coll. J. Pozzi* (Paris, 1928), pl. XLI, b; no. 25.

ब्रुपेकक्रोधप्रकासद्विमेषज्ञगतिप्रतिप्रबैकल्ल
 नारी॥ जोसप्रिहासिनकरतितिहारी॥ ५३॥ प्रोटीञ्चर्ध
 राजथावापहि॥ धीरनधरैकंपावैबादा॥ द्विनष्टलरोस



धिरावैनाह्यः॥ सांईसीसज्जोङ्डविराजै॥ भताङ्कंनिरपिस।

34 *Mature and Restless Heroine*: From a
Rasamañjari manuscript
 Deccan style, Aurangabad school, 1650
 5½ x 7¼ inches

The heroine here is portrayed as Pārvatī and the hero as

Siva seated on a tiger skin. The lady is described as
prauḍhā (mature or elderly) and *adhirā* (restless).
 For other pages from the same manuscript see S. Doshi,
 "An Illustrated Manuscript from Aurangabad dated 1650
 A.D.," in *Lalit Kalā*, no. 15, pp. 19f.



35

Rādhā and Krishna Walk to a Tryst

Deccan style, Hyderabad school,
18th century
 $7\frac{1}{2} \times 5\frac{1}{8}$ inches

In this night scene Krishna leads Rādhā to a tryst. They are accompanied by an attendant, all three sheltered by a shawl. An ascetic lady in black is watching from a grove of trees.



36

A Pleasure Garden

Rajput style, Bundi school, 1750-1775

26 $\frac{1}{8}$ x 14 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches

This unusually large painting depicts a scene in a princely pleasure garden beside a lake. The season is that of the rains. The prince arrives on the left, riding a horse, and then cavorts with his women within the walled garden. The painting may illustrate the rainy season from a *Bāramāsā*.





37

A Lady and Her Confidante: From a Rasamanjari

Rajput style, Nurpur school, 1700-1725

8½ x 11½ inches (including borders)

The *Rasamanjari*, composed by the poet Bhānudatta, is a rhetorical work concerned with love and its various nuances including classification of types of lovers. Here we see a heroine engaged in conversation with her confidante.

Other folios from this series are in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and in the Bickford and Binney Collections. See Binney, *Rajput Miniatures*, p. 100; Czuma, *Bickford Catalogue*, no. 106; Archer, *Indian Paintings*, pp. 306-09.



38

Meeting of Lovers

Rajput style, Kulu school, ca. 1750
 $9\frac{3}{4} \times 5\frac{7}{8}$ inches

Two ladies cavort in the foreground,
one holding a spindle. Above,
Krishna and Rādhā seem to have an
argument as they sit in a pavilion.



39

The Petulant Heroine
Rajput style, Kangra school, ca. 1825
 $9\frac{1}{8} \times 12\frac{1}{4}$ inches

As Krishna waits in one pavilion, in another a maid tries to persuade a petulant Rādhā to go to him. The offended woman or *mānī* has remained one of the most popular subjects with Indian poets.

PORTRAITS
40

An Old Man With a Fur
Mughal style, ca. 1625
 $3\frac{1}{4} \times 2\frac{3}{8}$ inches

A comparison with the following
portrait, rendered in the Rajput
style, will reveal the essential
difference between the two traditions
of painting. While the Mughal style
is more realistic, the Rajputs
preferred a more idealistic mode.



किशोरसिंह



41

Portrait of Kishorsinji
Rajput style, Bundi or Uniara
school, ca. 1700
 $7\frac{1}{4} \times 4\frac{1}{8}$ inches
A formal portrait of a nobleman
smelling a flower.

A Holy Man

Rajput style, Mewar school (?),

ca. 1725 4 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 2 inches

Whether this is a portrait of a particular person is difficult to determine, although the distinctive character and expression of the face are noteworthy. Representations of ascetics became a recognized genre in Indian paintings of the eighteenth century and later.





43

Vallabhāchārya with Followers

Rajput style, Kishangarh school, 1750-1775

7x8¾ inches

An enhaloed Vallabhāchārya, the famous Vaishnava saint of the sixteenth century, is seated in a hut. A devotee sits before him and holds up a cloth to the

saint's face, perhaps to wipe his perspiration. A musician and a merchant kneel outside the hut.

*A Crowned Figure Holding
a Manuscript*

Rajput style, Bilaspur school (?), ca. 1700

6½ x 4½ inches

Whether this is a portrait of an historical personage is difficult to determine. The crown, however, indicates his princely character. The

figure is remarkably similar to a personification of Vasanta rāga from a *Rāgamālā* set attributed to Bilaspur.

(See Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. II, p. 172, 8 (iii).)





45

A Prince Receives a Visitor
Rajput style, Mandi school, ca. 1750
 $9\frac{1}{4} \times 5\frac{1}{4}$ inches
Very likely the prince is
Shamsher Sen of Mandi. (See
Archer, *Indian Paintings*, Vol. II,
p. 269, 24, p. 270, 29, p. 272, 33).



A Man Greets a Prince
Rajput style, Mandi school, ca. 1775
 $7 \times 4\frac{5}{8}$ inches

This too may be a portrait of Raja Shamsher Sen of Mandi.





OTHER GENRES

47

A Royal Hunt

Signature of Tahri

Mughal style, ca. 1700

12 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 9 inches

Two princes riding two caparisoned horses hunt a tiger and a boar in a rocky landscape. The painting bears a signature of Tahri who was an artist attached to the Emperor Aurangzeb's atelier. On the reverse is a page of decorative calligraphy by Mehdi Ali Khan. I am grateful to Robert Skelton for the information.

Approaching Storm

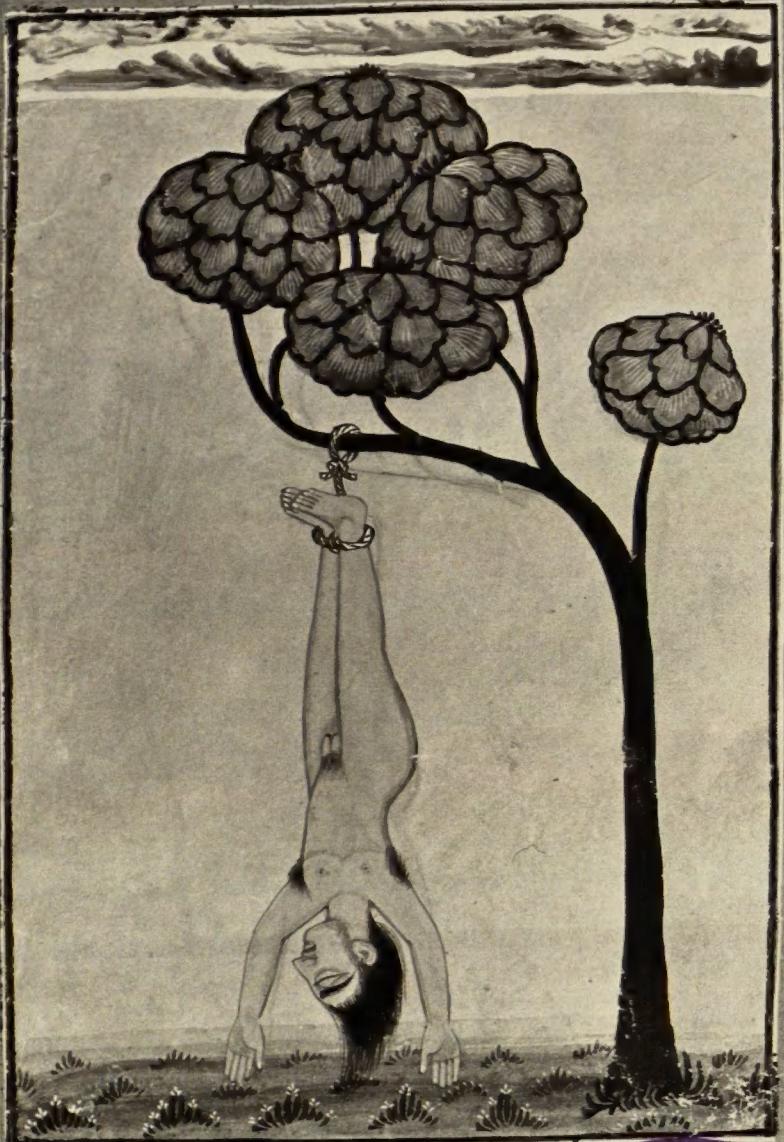
Mughal style, Murshidabad school (?),
ca. 1775

7x5 inches

A lady seeks shelter in a pavilion as
the sky is lit up by lightning
announcing an approaching storm.

On the reverse is a painting of
decorative flowers. Compare
with no. 23.



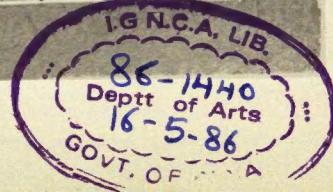


49

A Nude Man Hanging from a Tree

Rajput style, Kulu school, 1725-1750
5 3/4 x 4 inches

Very likely here we see a yogi engaged in performing a particular *āsana* rather than a man being hanged.



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